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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

November 29, 1975

Dear Nick:

I was pleased to receive your very frank letter concerning the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe held in Helsinki last summer.

I regret the delay in replying, but because of my own concerns, I wanted you to have an equally frank answer.

My participation in the Conference served several important American objectives in Europe. It reinforced our ties with our traditional allies by demonstrating our deep and continued interest in European affairs and our commitment to the maintenance of peace and security and the advancement of human rights throughout Europe. It helped place the Conference in perspective as an important element in our overall efforts to achieve a relaxation of tensions in Europe.

The CSCE document specifically recognized the right of self-determination of peoples and includes a strong affirmation of the principle of human rights and fundamental freedoms. I assure you that the United States and our allies will work together to ascertain and ensure implementation of all aspects of the Final Act of the Conference.

To relax the tensions between the superpowers concrete actions must be taken, including the freer movement of people and ideas which were stipulated in the Final Act of the Conference. At Helsinki I underscored the solemn nature of the promises made. I said that "it is important to recognize the deep devotion of the American people and their government to human rights and fundamental freedoms,

and thus to the pledges that the Conference has made regarding the freer movement of people, ideas and information." You will recall that I assured the leaders of a number of concerned American organizations on July 25 that I am mindful of the anxiety of Americans whose ancestral homelands, relatives, and friends are in East Europe.

The Conference results should not be interpreted to mean that present borders are permanently frozen in Europe. The Final Act stated that frontiers cannot be changed through the use of force -- a long standing and basic concept of American policy. The Final Act provides expressly that frontiers can be changed by peaceful means, thus affirming that the possibility for peaceful evolution, and frontier changes, still exist in Europe.

I said at Helsinki -- and I reiterate today -- that the process of detente depends on behavior patterns that give life to all our solemn declarations. The goals stated in Helsinki remain the yardstick by which performance will be measured. We have every right to expect concrete steps -- actions that verify words.

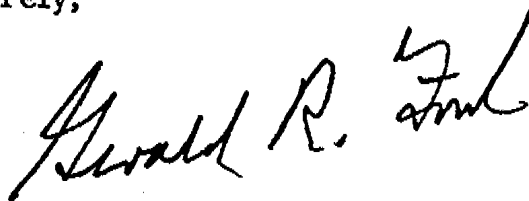
Tensions cannot be eased by one side alone. That is why my Administration is observing and measuring the translation into action of the noble sentiments espoused last August. I refer to the free exercise of the most fundamental human rights, liberty of thought, conscience, and faith, as well as civil and political rights, the rights of minorities, a freer flow of information, ideas and people, greater scope for the press, cultural and educational exchange, family reunification, the right to travel and to marriage between nationals of different states, and for the protection of the priceless heritage of our diverse cultures.

In coming months, the United States and our allies will be working together to ensure that all aspects of the Final Act of the Conference are implemented by the signatories, including in particular those provisions concerning human rights.

The founders of the United States did not merely say that all Americans were entitled to inalienable rights but that all men everywhere should have these rights. These principles have guided the United States of America throughout our two centuries of nationhood and must continue as a beacon light of hope for all the oppressed of the world.

You and your colleagues may rest assured that the United States Government has not deviated from America's traditional commitment to human freedom.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Gerald R. Ford". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style. The first name "Gerald" is written in a larger, more prominent script, followed by "R." and "Ford". The signature is positioned below the word "Sincerely,".

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